



**Store Donation
Program
Management**

Best Practices

These dates are:

- **“Sell by”** which is a date defined by the manufacturer or retailer as the last date on which their temperature sensitive foods should be sold;
- **“Use by”** which is a date that has a similar definition for temperature sensitive products but is also used on shelf stable products as a **quality** measurement.
- **“Best by”** which is a date generally used on shelf stable products and is **based on quality not food safety**.
- **“Expiration”** which is a date defined by the manufacturer or retailer and is **based on quality not food safety**.

Freezing foods allows you to keep the donations beyond their “Sell by”, “Use by” and “Best by” dates as shown in the Guidelines for storage times at the Food Bank/Agency below.

Please encourage your donors to freeze donated foods, if possible, so they are frozen solid when picked up.

Guidelines for storage times at Food Bank/Agency:

Food type	Storage time recommendations (from date of pickup)
Frozen prepared food	3 months.
Non-frozen prepared food	3 days maximum.
Produce	If whole within 7 days; if cut 48 hours.
Frozen meat	3 months.
Raw, shell eggs	7 days.
Dairy	7 days if does not smell bad.
Baked goods	3-5 days if not molding.
Pre-packaged foods-non-perishable	6 months. (Caution with grains, flours, pastas if not held refrigerated due to possible insect infestation).

II. TYPES OF FOODS WHICH ARE ACCEPTABLE AND SAFE

a) Handling and storage conditions at Donor and Food Bank/Agency

Type of foods	Temperature at pick up	Storage at Food Bank/Agency
Meats, fish, and shellfish (raw and cooked; includes rotisserie chicken) Prepared foods (off-site and on-site) Ice cream	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Frozen solid, at 0F or below. - Frozen on or before the "Sell by" or "Use by" dates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 0F or below. - If frozen, can keep up to 3 months after receipt. - If product is not frozen, freeze immediately, can keep up to 3 months after receipt.
Dairy products. (Milk, half and half, whipping cream, yogurt, cheeses, soy products, dips, butter, margarine, etc.). Eggs and egg substitutes. Bakery products. Cut Produce and leafy greens and melons, cantaloupes, honeydews. Individually packaged sandwiches. Deli items. (Potato salads, coleslaws, bean salads, macaroni salads, pork and beans, desserts, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 41F or lower. - (Note: No more than 1 day past "Sell by" and "Use by" dates). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 41F or below. - Use within recommended storage guidelines at the Food Bank. - If frozen, can be kept a maximum of 3 months. - Store allergens (Eggs, fish, milk, soy milk) separate from each other and away from other products. - (Note: raw, whole eggs should not be frozen)
Shelf stable products. Canned products. Jarred products. (Ketchup, mustard, BBQ sauce, Steak sauce, pickles, relishes, jams, jellies, preserves, salad dressings, salsas, mayonnaise, peanut butter, etc.) Bakery items (Bread, rolls, bagels, cakes, cookies, donuts, muffins). Dry products. (Flours, pastas, rice, grains, beans, lentils, etc.).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Room temperature. - Must be sealed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clean and dry storage rooms or warehouse. - Flours, pastas, dry beans, rice, grains, lentils should be refrigerated if not to be used in 3 months. - Store allergens (Peanuts, almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews) separate from each other and away from other products. - Bakery products should be frozen if not to be used within 48 hours.

a) Handling and storage conditions at Donor and Food Bank/Agency –continued

Type of foods	Temperature at pick up	Storage at Food Bank/Agency
Non Foods. (Paper goods, etc. Healthy and Beauty aids. OTC medications, Vitamins, Cleaning chemicals).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Room temperature. - (Note: Chemicals should be transported separate from each other and away from other products). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clean and dry storage rooms or warehouse. - Store chemicals away from food products.
Whole Produce. (Note: Not all whole produce needs to be kept under refrigeration.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Room temperature. - Chilled. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clean and dry storage rooms or warehouse. - Cooler.

b) Acceptable Shelf Stable products (Do not require refrigeration)

Type of foods	Unacceptable	Acceptable
Canned goods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unlabeled. - Cannot read the label. - No Codes on can. - Severely dented. - Dented on rims. - Very rusty, cannot be wiped off. - Leaking cans. - Swollen or bulging cans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Labeled so you can know what product it is, the weight, the distributor, the product name and the ingredients. - Coded so you can trace later if needed. - Small dents not on seal or rims - Rust can be wiped off.
Jarred goods (Glass or plastic).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unlabeled. - Cannot read the label. - No Codes on container. - Leaking containers. - Tamperproof seal broken. - Not in original container. - Fractured/chipped jar.F 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Labeled so you can know what product it is, the weight, the distributor, the product name and the ingredients. - Coded so you can trace later if needed. - Package not damaged. - Tamperproof seal intact. - Original container. - Vacuum seal intact.
Packaged dry goods (Manufactured).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unlabeled. - Cannot read the label. - No Codes on package. - Singularly package and package is open (ripped, torn, exposing product). - Double packaged - Inner package damaged, wet or stained. - Not in original package. - Product appearance is not good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Labeled so you can know what product it is, the weight, the distributor, the product name and the ingredients. - Coded so you can trace later if needed. - Singularly package which is intact and sealed with no tears, rips, stains, etc. - Doubly package with outer package damaged but internal package is in good condition. - In original package. - Product looks good - no mold, no bad odor, etc.
Packaged dry goods (Made at donor). (Cookies, Donuts, Cakes, Muffins, Bread, Bagels, etc.).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No ingredient list or allergen disclaimer statement. - Not completely covered. - Not wrapped in food-grade packaging. - Packing damaged, wet, stained. - Product appearance is not good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List of ingredients available or an allergen disclaimer statement. - Packaging not damaged. - Wrapped or packaged in approved food grade packaging. - Packaging not wet or stained. - Product looks and smells good – no visible mold, no bad odor, etc.

c) Acceptable Temperature Sensitive Products (Require refrigeration)

Type of foods	Unacceptable	Acceptable
Prepared Foods (Manufactured).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not in original package. - Cannot read ingredient statement. - Singularly packaged and package is damaged, open, wet or stained. - Doubly packaged and internal package is damaged, wet or stained. - Not coded with "Use by" or "Sell by" date. - More than 1 day passed "Use by" or "Sell by" date and not frozen. - Over 41F. - Product, if visible, is moldy. - Product smells bad. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In original package. - Labeled so you can know what product it is, the weight, the distributor, the product name and the ingredients - Singularly package and package is intact and sealed with no tears, rips, stains, etc. - Doubly package with outer package damaged but internal package is in good condition. - Code readable as to the "Use by" or "Sell by" dates. - Not more than one day passed the "Use by" "Sell by" date. - At 41F or below. - Product, if visible, looks good and does not smell bad.
Prepared Foods (Prepared at Donor).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not completely wrapped. - Not in approved food grade packaging. - Unlabeled and no ingredient statement or allergen disclaimer statement provided as required (See page 11). - Over 41F. - Not cooled down to 41F if previously held hot. - Wrapped sandwiches more than 1 day passed their "Sell by" date. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completely wrapped in approved food grade packaging. - List of ingredients provided or allergen disclaimer statement. - Cooled quickly if previously held hot. - At 41F or below. - Sandwiches can be consumed up to 3 days after "Sell by" date but it is preferable to consume not more than 1 day past their "Sell by" date.

c) Acceptable Temperature Sensitive Products (Require refrigeration) -continued

Type of foods	Unacceptable	Acceptable
Other Refrigerated Products (Ready to eat meats, Eggs, Liquid eggs, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not in original package. - Cannot read ingredient statement. - Singularly packaged and package is damaged, open, wet or stained. - Doubly packaged and internal package is damaged, wet or stained. - Not coded with "Use by" or "Sell by" date. - More than 1 day passed "Use by" or "Sell by" date and not frozen. - Over 41F. - Liquid eggs more than 72 hours past "Use by" date and not frozen. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In original package and labeled so you can know what product it is, the weight, the distributor, the product name and the ingredients. - Singularly packaged and package not torn, wet or stained. - Doubly packaged and internal package is not damaged, wet or stained. - Coded with "Use by" or "Sell by" date. - Within 1 day of "Use by" or "Sell by" date. - 41F or below. - Liquid eggs not more than 72 hours past "Use by" date. - Shell eggs can be used up to 7 days after "Sell by" date
Produce (Whole). Note: Not all Produce needs to be kept under refrigeration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moldy. - Decayed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In good condition not moldy or decayed.
Produce (Cut or sliced): Salads, diced tomatoes, coleslaws, fruit salads, etc. (Note: Produce that has been cut or sliced <i>requires</i> refrigeration.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moldy or decayed. - Over 41F. - If used in salad bars. - More than 1 day passed "Sell by" date. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Under 41F. - In good condition not moldy or decayed or having bad odor.

d) Acceptable Frozen foods (Require a freezer).

Type of foods	Unacceptable	Acceptable
Raw meats and fish. (Beef, Pork, Lamb, Chicken) (Fish)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not frozen solid. - Above OF. - Not frozen by "Sell by" date. - Product shows signs of freezer burn (thawing and refreezing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Frozen solid. - OF or below. - No freezer burn. - Fish packed separately. - Shellfish packed separately.
Prepared Frozen Foods. (Manufactured).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not in original package. - Cannot read the package. - Singularly packaged and package is damaged, open, wet or stained. - Doubly packaged and internal package is damaged, wet or stained. - Not coded with "Use by" or "Sell by" date. - More than 1 day passed "Use by" or "Sell by" date. - Not frozen solid. - Above OF. - Product shows signs of freezer burn (thawing and refreezing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In original package. - Package readable. - Singularly package and package is intact and sealed with no tears, rips, stains, etc. - Doubly package with outer package damaged but internal package is in good condition. - Code readable as to the "Use by" or "Sell by" dates. - Not more than one day passed the "Use by" "Sell by" date. - At OF or below. - No signs of freezer burn.
Prepared Foods. (Prepared by Donor).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unlabeled. - Cannot read the label. - No Codes on package. - Packaging is damaged. - Not packaged in approved food contact packaging. - Product appearance is not good. - Product shows signs of freezer burn (thawing and re-freezing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Labeled so you can know what the product is and the ingredients or have an allergen disclaimer statement. - Dated so you can trace later if needed. - Wrapped well in approved packaging materials to prevent freezer burn. - Product looks good - no mold, no bad odor, etc. - No signs of freezer burn.